

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT ISSUE PAPER NUMBER 9
--MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION COURSES S-201/301/401--

BACKGROUND:

Curriculum Issue Paper Number 3 dealt with title changes to these courses. This issue paper (Number 9) deals with concerns regarding presentation times for these courses and with a development scheduling change for completion of S-401.

Completion and publication of all three courses were initially planned for late FY 94. Development was delayed due to a late start and the 1994 fire season which resulted in the cancellation of reviews and several test courses. NIFC was able to have the funding reallocated by BLM for FY 95.

The course development steering committee met February 7 - 8, 1995 at NIFC to review the development status of the courses and determine action on NIFC and Training Working Team concerns regarding presentation times of S-201 and S-301 and curriculum placement of S-401. Results of the meeting, as they pertain to each course, are described below.

CURRENT STATUS:

S-201 Supervisory Concepts and Techniques --

This course has received a formative test and field review. Due to lack of word processing, the review product was rough but an edit has now been performed and corrections are being incorporated. The 30 hours of classroom presentation time plus 4 - 6 hours prestudy is a more significant concern. This is considerably more than approved by NWCG in the curriculum proposal (8 hours) and more than agencies would be able to manage at the local level for seasonal employees. This concern had been discussed with members of the Training Working Team and it was agreed that, while 16 hours may be acceptable, 30 plus hours would not be acceptable. In addition, there appeared to be some overlap between S-201 and S-301.

The Steering Committee decided to reduce the S-201 course to 16 classroom hours plus a small prestudy element (approx. 2 hours). An additional 1-hour unit will be left in the course but will be optional. A listing of instructional units showing reductions in presentation times is attached. Revision is currently underway and at least one more test course will be required. Development should be completed by October 1995.

S-301 Leadership and Organization Development --

This course has received a formative test and field review. Materials are of good quality and design proved effective in

the test course. Although there are some concerns with expanded presentation time (32 hours as designed vs 16 hours as approved by NWCG), it was generally felt that the presentation level (region/state) and target group (unit leader level; probably permanent employees) could support a course of this length. As in S-201, this also had been verified through prior discussion with Training Working Team members. The concern with overlap between S-201 and S-301 was resolved with the revisions made to S-201. S-301 will build upon, but will not duplicate, instruction in S-201.

The steering committee decided to leave S-301 as is. A summative test will be required. Development should be completed in FY 95.

S-401 Advanced Management Concepts --

This course has been developed in draft, however field review and testing has not occurred. There is a significant concern that the instruction in this course should remain part of S-420 where it traditionally has been. The fact that all positions for which S-401 is suggested training also take S-420 supports having a single course. The contractor's (Halsey/Vance) proposal was for the advanced management and team building to be in S-401 and that S-401 be a prerequisite to S-420 which would only be the simulation exercise. The contractors also recommended that S-401 and S-420 be taught together.

The steering committee felt that leaving advanced management and team building a part of S-420 and deleting S-401 from the curriculum may be valid; however, the decision would best be made in relation to development of S-420. After further discussion, NIFC agrees and is recommending rescheduling of S-401 to coincide with development of S-420 (FY 1999 - 2000). All existing materials will be retained for use at that time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The NIFC National Fire and Aviation Training Support Group recommends that the Training Working Team:

1. Approve actions by the steering committee to:
 - a. Reduce S-201 to 16 classroom hours of core instruction plus a small prestudy element. An additional unit of approximately 1 hour will remain in the course but will be optional. Development will be completed in FY 95.
 - b. Proceed with development and publication of S-301 as a 32 hour course. Development will be completed in FY 95.

2. Approve rescheduling of S-401 to coincide with development of S-420. A recommendation to delete S-401 from the curriculum may be made at that time, if appropriate.

APPROVED:

Chairman, Training Working Team

Date